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incumbent of the post, seem to have been important factors in the choice. However, to-day warfare has been abolished by the white Government, the warrior chief no longer exists, and it is therefore difficult to get exact information on his role. But some idea of the type of warfare, which appears to have been on a rather small scale, may be gathered from a tale of fighting between Lesu and Tagam, the two former villages now making up Lesu. The people of Lesu were considered the best fighters of the two, and the Tagam people were much afraid of them. Because of their fear, Tagam members ran away to the village of Fakmalak, and while they were gone the Lesu people stole taro from the Tagam gardens and their pigs. This went on for some time, until the Lesu people notified the Tagam people, hiding at Fakmalak, that they were ready to make peace. Accordingly the Tagam people returned and there was an exchange of *tsera* (currency) between the two. (This is the first rite in peace-making.)

The day after their return the Tagam people went to their gardens in the bush, but their chief, Seiut, stayed at home in order to make a *kepkep* (breast ornament). The Lesu people, who were not honest in their talk about peace, now sent two men to kill Seiut. They came to his house and said that they would like to watch him work on the *kepkep*. He invited them in, and they killed him by cutting his head open and slashing his body. A few of the Tagam people, who remained at home, beat the *kolamuth* (hollowed tree-trunk used as a signalling drum), and the others returned from their gardens. When they found their chief dead, they were again afraid and wanted to run away back to Fakmalak. But Lemlum, the Lesu chief, said that now they had attained their object in killing Seiut, and that they were willing to have real peace. A big feast was made by the Lesu people, who gave uncooked taro and pig to the Tagam people. Another exchange of *tsera* also took place, followed by ritual

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singing, until they come to the hamlet of Ponatlege, where the enclosure is to be built. Ridis, an old man, leads in the singing. When they arrive at Ponatlege the women and girls (about 150 of them) are already sitting on the ground in the open compound preparing the taro to be baked. The men and boys pass by them and proceed to the beach, where they put down their bamboo poles and lay them lengthwise. Ongas, the chief of Lesu, and known for his building skill, is in command of the work. Poles are stuck in the ground as a support for the split bamboo logs, which are laid on top of each other, thus making a fence about 30 feet high for the large enclosure, which is approximately 45 by 100 feet. There is no roof. As they labour the men sing. Young boys watch the work with interest. The name for this enclosure is *nogu*, which is the name for any fence made of split wood.

While the enclosure is constructed the women scrape the taro, laying them on the banana leaves, sprinkle the shredded coconut over it, and bind it all up into a bundle. Some of the men not occupied in building the enclosure make the *liga*, the piles of hot stones. In a few hours' time the taro is all wrapped in bundles and put in the *liga*, which is then completely covered with leaves and sand; the main part of the latter work is done by the men, but the women assist. The men have also prepared a pig, which is being baked in a separate *liga*.

The enclosure has been finished. The men and women sit in the compound or at ease on the beach, chatting. The men are in groups apart from the women. Soon the *kolamuth* (a hollowed tree-trunk used as a drum) is sounded inside the enclosure, and the men wend their way there. Some of them carry on their shoulder poles to which coconuts are tied. The food is removed from the *liga* and other men carry part of it into the enclosure. The women pile the remainder in their baskets. It is early afternoon now and the men eat in

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A few boys and men (six of them) are allowed to come in during the night and watch them, for which privilege they pay *tsera* and tobacco to Sola and Mekeo. The observers must eat some of the fat from the pigs which have been killed for the feast to be held in the morning. This is a ritual duty, and the fat is not eaten because they like it. Sometimes a man who cannot stomach the fat will merely lick it with his tongue. No native explanation for this custom exists, but it is believed that some misfortune would befall the man who had neglected to eat the fat: he might cut himself while felling a tree, or fall from a tree and die. No one else sees these *Pundän*, and after the rites they are destroyed, even before the *malanggans*.

The next morning about a hundred men gather in the enclosure at Ponatlege. The two *Pundän* are out of sight in the separate little enclosure behind the *malanggan* house, in front of which the food is piled—two pigs, baked taro, bananas, and a species of chestnut (*koh*). Sola stands up and talks: "These two pigs belong to the concluding rites for the *malanggan*. We have made big rites for them. All the men and all the women ate pigs. Now to-day we, the men, but not the women, will eat pigs. Why have not all the men from Langania come? All the men from Lesu and Ambwa are here. The Langania men did not come because they are lazy." Sola now gives *tsera* to one man in payment for the pig. He has contributed the other one himself. The food is distributed according to traditional custom. After this Sola comes out adorned with a feather headdress, a bright red loin-cloth, a pig's liver hanging out of his mouth, the shark fishing rattle in one hand, and a smaller shell rattle in the other. *Kerapo* leaves are stuck in his armband. Thus arrayed, he dances up and down the centre of the enclosure and sings, or rather hums a wordless song. This performance is called *baeas*.

When the men have eaten there are speech[illegible] by the old

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CHAPTER VIII

KNOWLEDGE, MAGIC, AND RELIGION

184 WHAT the Lesu man and woman do in their daily routine and in their social and ritual life has been described. The question arises: What is the body of knowledge and beliefs on which their actions are based? Much of the knowledge and all of the beliefs are common property, known to all, although there is some knowledge which is of a more esoteric nature. There is but little differentiation on the basis of sex, although of course knowledge of the crafts which are followed by one sex are known only to them. Men are not skilled in the intricacies of preparing taro, nor women in the art of house-building. But in familiarity with myths and folk-tales, in information about natural phenomena, in the comprehension of supernatural beliefs, there appears to be no differentiation between the men and women. However, the men do have a certain kind of esoteric knowledge not shared by the women. The *malanggans* are not supposed to be seen by the women, who, however, know that they exist and the myths concerning them, and participate in the rites. But they do not see the carvings when they are on display. This is a privilege only for the males.[1] The women are quite aware of their significance, although

[1] At Lesu the women did not look at the *malanggans*, but at Logagon, a village in another linguistic district about twenty-five miles away, and the centre of a mission, this custom had broken down, and the women went into the enclosure and looked at the carvings at the conclusion of the rites. So strong was the feeling, however, at Lesu, that when I purchased a musical instrument called *Loanuat*, connected with a *malanggan* by the same name and taboo for women to see, the latter expressed no desire to see it. It was in a secluded part of my house, and the men went in to see and to play it, but the women, with perfect good taste, stayed on the other side of the house and did not attempt to go near the *Loanuat*, although they heard it being played.

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